THE MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

DOLIR REVIEW

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First Quarter 2002 Service Awards
Employees Honored For Service to the Department

By Joann Lindemann, Office of Public Affairs

Thirty-seven department employees were honored with Service Awards for their dedication and service to the citizens of Missouri. Service awards for the first quarter of 2002 were presented during a ceremony April 26 at the Dunklin Street facility in Jefferson City.

Service Awards are presented to employees who have accumulated tenure with the Department in five-year increments, beginning with five years of service.

A complete list of Service Award recipients can be found on page 2.

Employees with 25 years of service include (from left), Beth Vaughn, Judy Stegeman, Rebecca Leonard, Renae Woodland and Deborah King.

From left, Moneen Gilleland, Jim Boeckman and Mary Rademan were present at the ceremony and honored for 15 years of service to the Department.

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Employee Profile

Bob Walter

Title:
Computer Information Technology Supervisor II
Division:
DOLIR Administration
Section:
Information Systems
Location:
Jefferson City

Q *What do you consider the most important thing your program/division does for Missouri citizens?*

A Information Systems End-User Support supports 1,350 users statewide. I supervise a staff of eight people within Information Systems. We support all desktop, laptop computers and software within the Department. Keeping the computers and software up to date makes it easier for department employees to handle Missouri citizen's needs. We have many out-state employees in the Division of Employment Security's four unemployment insurance claims centers and contributions field offices; the Division of Workers' Compensation; Missouri Commission on Human Rights and the Division of Labor Standards. It is very important that End-User Support have all of the computers, software and systems up and running at all times for the citizens of Missouri.

Q *How does what you personally do in your job help or affect Missouri citizens?*

A With up-to-date software and state of the art equipment, the users within the Department can get the requested data back to the Missouri citizens.

Q *How do you think what you do could be improved or changed to better serve Missourians?*

A As technology changes our Department needs to keep in place current operating systems and state of the art computers.

Q *What part of what you do gives you the most satisfaction/pride/feeling of accomplishment?*

A Over the last four months End-User Support has replaced over 300 desktop and laptop computers. With the work load of configuring and installing new computers, moving of the St. Louis Unemployment Insurance Claims Center, St. Louis Appeals office and Workers' Comp employees at the DOLIR building, we have been exceptionally busy. I take a lot of pride in my job, and in the staff of eight of the hardest working people that I have ever worked with. I feel we have one of the best teams within Information Systems. During 2001, End-User Support closed over 9,000 problem tickets in the Tivoli Help Desk System. End-User Support sends out a survey letter and we collect satisfaction metrics. End-User Support scores an average of 87 percent customer satisfaction.

First Quarter 2002 Service Award Honorees

5 Years

George Griswell, Jr.

10 Years

Patricia Brant
Jared Brockman
Ray Findley
David Hart, Jr.
Kathleen Hart
Carolyn Koetting
Judith Schulte
Alice Schweer
Carrie Sisson
Michelle Thomlison
Margaret Treese
Louise Tutt
Matt Vacca

15 Years

Jim Boeckman
Pamela Coppay
Christina Dodson
Moneen Gilleland
Robert Hargus
Mary Rademan
Becky Voss

20 Years

Cindy Guthrie
Shirley Sandbothe
Janet Stinson

25 Years

Ferdinand Frank
Charles Halterman
Deborah King
Rebecca Leonard
Jo Ann Markway
Betty Means
Judy Stegeman
Beth Vaughan
Renae Woodland

30 Years

Patrick Leonard
John Miller
Dorothy Tellman

40 Years

John Gaw

Employers Respond Favorably to Contributions' Survey

By Cindy Guthrie and Maurine McAboy, Division of Employment Security

The Division of Employment Security surveyed employers to ascertain how they view the services provided by Contributions' staff members. The survey questioned the quality, accessibility and ease of understanding of information. It also asked for input on services being considered for the future. Surveys were mailed to approximately 129,000 employers with the second quarter 2001 contribution and wage reports. Employment Security received approximately 15,000 responses to this survey.

Gracia Backer, Division of Employment Security director said, "I am pleased with the positive results of the survey. I am especially happy to see individual employees recognized for the fine work they do for the state of Missouri." Employers' responses show support for plans being developed by the Division and Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to allow employers to submit forms and make electronic payments via the Internet.

The following are the results of the survey:

- 97.8 % of the employers responded that the Division representatives were courteous or very courteous.
- 92.9% of the employers advised that the Division representatives are timely or very timely.
- An impressive 98.3% responded that the representative answered questions in a satisfactory or very satisfactory manner.
- 94.3% perceived the Division representative to be helpful or very helpful.
- 9.5% of employers responded that they had accessed the Division's website. 82.5% of those who had accessed the website found the information easily accessible and 87.4% found the information helpful.
- 38.9% of the employers advised that they would be interested in completing the quarterly contribution and wage report by the Internet and 31% answered that they would like to make their payment electronically as well.
- 42.5% said they would like to complete other forms, such as registration, status change and adjustment forms via the Internet.

Several staff members were mentioned by name. The following are quotes from the survey concerning UI auditors:

"Carol Stephenson at the Springfield office has been extremely helpful and easy to work with."

"Jim McCallister is a gem. Very nice, helpful – makes me want to give him money. He's excellent."

"We have had many dealings with one of your local (Monett) representatives over the past years for various reasons. His name is Rod Grewe and he is a shining example of courtesy and helpfulness. All state workers should be like him. You should be proud and thankful to have him working for you."

"Mike Miller at the St. Joseph office has always been very helpful. Thank you."

"Alan Kearby from your Nevada office has been the most helpful, courteous person in a government/state office I've ever had the pleasure to speak with. He has patiently explained procedures, laws and instructions for me during the past 10 years with my bookkeeping service for several businesses."

"We have not had a need to contact your Department. However we were audited by (Mike Clarahan)

(Continued on Page 6)

Director's Message

The Importance of Good Customer Service

Congratulations to everyone in the Division of Employment Security's Employer Contributions section for another job well done.

In this issue of ***DOLIR Review*** you will find an article detailing the Division's success in providing top quality customer service to employers. The results of a customer satisfaction survey show that employers who work with Division staff feel representatives are courteous, timely and helpful.

This is no small achievement, especially when one considers the volume of calls that are handled and the complexity of the information being exchanged.

Take pride in your work. We are proud of you all.

Catherine Hanaway

Department Employee is State's First Female Referee IV

Libby Rains of the Department's Appeals office in Springfield, MO is the state's first female Appeals Referee IV. She was promoted to this position in January.

When asked about her extraordinary achievement, Rains says she considers it an honor. "I am honored to have the opportunity to try to do a good job for the superb staff in the Appeals section in general, and in the Springfield office in particular," she says.

Rains has been an appeals referee with the Department since March 1987. Before that, she served as chief hearing examiner for the Missouri Commission on Human Rights in Jefferson City, as a business law instructor at Southwest Missouri State University and as an attorney for Dallas Legal Aid in Dallas, TX.

Rains' supervisor Bonnie Keaton is pleased about the promotion. "We are very fortunate to have Libby," says Keaton. "She is very easy going, yet is meticulous about her work. She approaches her job carefully and plans thoroughly. She doesn't get upset or rattled easily, which is a great quality for an appeals referee." Keaton adds, "Libby is very conscientious and concerned about getting the job done, and getting it done well."

CASH/VOIGHT DANCE THEATER

April 19, 2002

Mr. Spencer Clark
Contributions Supervisor IV
State of Missouri
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations
Division of Employment Security
421 East Dunklin Street
P.O. Box 59
Jefferson City, MO 65104-0059

Dear Mr. Clark:

This letter is to document the extraordinary service and impeccable hospitality of Ms. Stacey Eickhorst.

As a small non-profit organization, handling our unemployment taxes is not the most enjoyable task. However, Ms. Eickhorst has been a pleasure to work with and has been immediate in response to my needs. She has put a personal touch in making sure we were accurately reporting and that our situation was handled correctly.

The State of Missouri should be proud to have Ms. Eickhorst on their team. I recommend to you to do all in your power to keep Ms. Eickhorst on your staff (promotion, raise, recognition, benefits, etc.). It will only improve your industry relations to reassure organizations that Missouri is the place to do business.

Sincerely,

Scott D. Giffen
Executive Director

Performances Residencies Commissions
P.O. Box 11526 St. Louis, MO 63105 Tel. 314.721.0052 Fax. 314.721.6030
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Quote of the Month

"The only disability in life is a bad attitude."

– Scott Hamilton

Neet's News...

WHAT IS GOING ON IN YOUR TEENAGER'S HEAD?

It is the mystery of mysteries, especially to parents – the unpredictable moods and behaviors of American teenagers. Today, experts are exploring the recesses of the brain and finding new explanations for why adolescents behave the way they do.

There are two processes of normal brain growth that affect teenagers: overproduction and pruning. First the brain develops by over producing synapses, tiny spaces between neurons or nerves that "fire" messages from one neuron to another at amazing speed. Second the brain fine tunes synapses by strengthening those that get used and pruning away others, not unlike a healthy rose bush that bears many roses because it gets cut back each year.

Scientists used to believe that nearly all brain development happened early in life; new research highlights important changes going on in the pre-teen and teen brain. But while 95 percent of the human brain has developed by age six, scientists tell us that the greatest spurts of growth after infancy takes place before adolescence. Neuroscientist Jay Giedd of the National Institute of Mental Health explains, "New brain growth depends upon use in order to become permanent, rather than lost. Those cells and connections that are used will survive and flourish. So if a teen is doing music or sports or academics, those are the cells and connections that will be hard wired."

Though there is still a lot of debate among scientists about critical periods for learning, it appears that teenagers do have greater flexibility than adults in some areas of learning. The growth of new connections in the brain allows teens to shift their attention rapidly from one thing to another with amazing ease. The capacity to "shift set," or change the framework of focus from one thing to another, also allows teenagers to pick up new languages and to learn musical instruments more readily than adults.

Adolescence is no longer a carefree extension of childhood, and today's teenagers face challenges that their parents did not. Staying involved in your teen's life and helping him or her to navigate these tumultuous years is more critical than ever before.

The following tips and suggestions may help you to make a bigger difference in your teen's life:

Make Time for Your Teen: Teenagers long to talk and be heard at home and to have time to connect with parents rather than perform or rush to the next task. One of the best ways to do this is during relaxed, regular activities such as preparing meals, taking walks, playing cards or just hanging out in an open-ended way.

Listen to Your Teen: Teenagers need a safe place to vent, and often the safest place is at home where they feel accepted, "warts and all." Sitting with your teenager during these times, just your presence without much commentary, can be of enormous help.

Empower your Teen With Information: Educate your teenager about the changes happening in his or her brain. Let your teen know that good sleep and nutrition are especially important to support brain development and that there are long-term consequences to the brain from risky behaviors such as drug use.

Help your Teen Get More Sleep: Once your teen understands that research indicates that learning also depends upon getting plenty of sleep to consolidate what has been learned and to prepare the brain to take in new information, negotiate a schedule that allows for at least nine hours of sleep on a regular basis. Work together to find ways to limit stimulating late-evening activities.

For more information on the brain and talking with teens visit these websites:

www.pbs.org/frontline
www.parentsoup.com

Information for this article was taken from a parent's guide written by Annie G. Rogers, Ph.D., Associate Professor in Human Development and Psychology, Harvard Graduate School of Education and developed by Simone Bloom Nathan, Ed.M. and Anne Kaplan, M.A. of Media Education Consultants, with input from Jessica Smith of FRONTLINE.

Neet McCowen is Caring Communities Coordinator for the Department. To reach her, please call (573) 751-3817.

Dunn's Safety Tips - Controlling Garden Pests Safely

As spring returns, so do the pests that threaten your garden and lawn. If you intend to do battle with these pests, keep in mind that improper use of pesticides can harm you and other people, birds and other animals, and desirable plants just as readily as the target pests. Here are some things to remember if you want to use lawn and garden pesticides safely.

1. **What is it?**

Before you can determine the best way to control a pest, identify it. The county agricultural extension service or a reputable lawn and garden center can help.

2. **Simple prevention methods.**

First using some simple, manual pest control methods – removing inspects, destroying diseased plants and cleaning up areas that promote pest breeding – can usually reduce the need for pesticides.

3. **Natural (biological) pest controls.**

Many natural methods of pest control work quite well. Options include beneficial predators (attracting birds and releasing certain insects), parasitoids that lay eggs inside the eggs or bodies of insect pests, microscopic pathogens (fungi, bacteria and viruses), and biochemical pesticides (pheromones, juvenile insect hormones).

Be careful to remember that non-chemical does not mean non-hazardous.

If you decide to use chemical pesticides, follow safe practices:

- Choose the correct and safest pesticide for the problem.
- Carefully read and follow all label directions and warnings.
- Store pesticides in a dry, ventilated area that you can lock. Don't store near food.
- When applying the product, wear long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, shoes (not sandals), a hat, gloves, safety glasses and other recommended protective equipment.
- Don't eat, drink or smoke while using pesticides.
- Keep people and pets out of the yard or garden while applying pesticides and wait for the product to dry before allowing re-entry.
- Avoid spraying or spreading chemicals on a windy day.
- Clean up equipment immediately.
- Dispose of excess or old pesticides and containers properly.
- Shower after applying pesticides. Wash clothes in hot water immediately and separately from other clothes.

Source: www.Walgreens.com

Steve Dunn is the Department's Safety Coordinator.
He is also Director of the Mine and Cave Safety and Health Consultation Program for the Division of Labor Standards.

Special Flag to Fly at Employment Security Building

Judy Bailey of the Division of Employment Security's Jefferson City Regional Claims Center made a comment one day to her husband that it would be nice to have a "nice big flag" to display in her unit. Judy's husband, Ed, must have thought so, too.

Ed took the steps necessary to secure a very special flag from U.S. Senator Jean Carnahan. The flag was flown over the U.S. Capitol on February 7, 2002 at Carnahan's request for the Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to commemorate the Department's past and present military service personnel.

Carol Luecke, Judy's supervisor, thought the flag was a wonderful gesture. "I wanted to share this special flag with everyone," she said.

The flag will fly at the Employment Security building at 421 East Dunklin Street in Jefferson City over the Memorial Day holiday weekend.

Carol Luecke (left) and Judy Bailey with the special flag.

Employers Respond to Contributions Survey *(Continued from Page 3)*

one of your employees in the Kirksville office. His contact with us was very courteous and polite. He answered all our questions concerning the time he was at our place of business and in a phone conversation following the audit."

"Dottie Bauman is the representative in this area. I have always found her to be courteous, knowledgeable and very helpful to me."

"We find the representatives in the Columbia office (Louise Kneuvean and Ray Findley) to be extremely helpful."

The following were quotes concerning the Employer Contributions staff members:

"You have some wonderful people working in Jefferson City, MO. Renae Woodland, Becky Forston and Pat Leonard have been very helpful."

"Barbara Call was very, very helpful with straightening out our account when I first was employed with Jerry Ackerman. She was very diligent. I would be proud to have such an employee as Barbara Call. Thank you for all your assistance."

"Brenda Johnson has been very helpful and pleasant to work with."

"I have been helped immensely by Teri Schulte over the telephone. If there is ever a need for a person to be a model for what is expected from our government employees she has my nomination."

"I would say a thank you to Marlis (Meyer) who has helped me many times. 'Thank you'."

"Sharon Williams and Karen Dormire have helped tremendously in related matters! Thank you."

"Julie Joens and Shirley Stephan have been very helpful and courteous."

"Vicki Losi is very helpful, courteous and knowledgeable."

Employment Security management and staff are pleased with the positive response received by the survey. The Division is proud of its workers and views the survey response as recognition for a job well done.

LIFESTYLES

Retirees from April 2002

Administration

Paul Johnson, Maintenance Supervisor I, Facilities and Maintenance

Division of Employment Security

Donald Brohammer, Claims Supervisor III, Springfield Regional Claims Center
Patrick Leonard, Labor and Industrial Relations Manager, Employer Contributions
Joann Markway, Claims Supervisor III, Jefferson City Regional Claims Center

New Employees from April 2002

Administration

Cory Alspach, Computer Operator I, Information Systems
Jackie Fischer, Graphic Arts Specialist II, Administrative Services

Appeals

Edith Whitfield, Senior Office Support Assistant

Division of Employment Security

Christopher Estes, Claims Technician I, Jefferson City Regional Claims Center
Karyn Forrest, Claims Technician I, Kansas City Regional Claims Center
Shirley Lee, Claims Technician I, Kansas City Regional Claims Center
Sherry Lewis, Office Support Assistant, Employer Contributions
Stephen Parker, Contributions Technician I, Employer Contributions
Deya Patterson, Office Support Assistant, Employer Contributions
Christine Rowden, Office Support Assistant, Employer Contributions

Promotions from April 2002

Appeals

Mary J. Leary, Appeals Referee III
Tiffany Robbins, Appeals Referee III

Division of Employment Security

Brent Alexander, Claims Technician II, St. Louis Regional Claims Center
Karen Berendzen, Claims Technician II, Jefferson City Regional Claims Center
Jared Brockman, Claims Supervisor II, Springfield Regional Claims Center
Pamela Deloyola, Claims Technician II, Jefferson City Regional Claims Center
Doris Dorge, Contributions Technician II, Employer Contributions
Dyan Emery, Claims Technician II, Springfield Regional Claims Center
Bonnie Graham, Claims Technician II, Jefferson City Regional Claims Center
Sheri Harvey, Contributions Technician II, Employer Contributions
Deborah King, Claims Technician II, Benefits
Edna Kliethermes, Claims Technician II, Jefferson City Regional Claims Center
Ronald McClure, Claims Technician II, Jefferson City Regional Claims Center
Jacqueline McDaniel, Contributions Technician II, Employer Contributions
Lori McDonald, Claims Technician II, Jefferson City Regional Claims Center
Sharon Personett, UI Auditor I, Contributions Field
Patsy Ryan, Claims Technician II, Jefferson City Regional Claims Center
Dorothy Tellman, Labor and Industrial Relations Manager, Employer Contributions
Carol Uding, Claims Supervisor III, St. Louis Regional Claims Center

May and June Cultural Diversity Activities

In May DOLIR will recognize National Asian/Pacific American and Older American Month. On Wednesday, May 15 Mr. Mack Brushwood discussed AARP, ARMSE and issues related to retirement and older Americans. Mrs. Kathleen Palmero discussed how investments, scams and fraudulent activities affect older Americans. The discussions took place in the Dunklin Street facility, Training Room 3.

In June, the Department will celebrate "Men's Month." DOLIR will recognize the achievements of our own male employees. Bulletin boards will be located in the Dunklin Street and Truman Boulevard buildings in Jefferson City. If you would like to nominate yourself or someone else for this honor, notify Tracy Ezell, human relations officer.

REFLECTIONS

JoAnn Markway retired April 30, 2002 after more than 25 years of service to the Department. Markway worked as a claims supervisor in the Jefferson City Regional Claims Center of the Division of Employment Security.
When asked her fondest memory of her time with the Department, Markway submitted this verse.

DES Employees
work together and work shared is lighter;
laugh together and laughter, shared, multiplies;
cry together and sadness, shared, decreases.

JoAnn Markway

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